

The writing in things fall apart

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The writing in *Things Fall Apart* by Chinua Achebe, is different than what I normally read. I think this has to do with the proverbs that are used. Achebe uses lyrical and visual language through the use of proverbs and short stories to provide a photographic view of the Ibo culture.

Yam, the king of crops, was a very exacting king. For three or four moons it demanded hard work and constant attention from the cock-crow till the chickens went back to roost (Achebe, 35). Golding's writing in *Lord of the Flies* is also lyrical but less staccato than Achebe. Golding uses ornate words, rich in vivid detail and symbolism. I can relate and understand his style of writing as it is written in a non-biblical format as Achebe's, *Things Fall Apart*.

Here the beach was interrupted abruptly by the square motif of the landscape; a great platform of pink granite thrust up uncompromisingly through forest and terrace and sand and lagoon to make a raised jetty four feet high. The top of this was covered with a thin layer of soil and coarse grass and shaded with young palm trees. There was not enough soil for them to grow to any height, and when they reached perhaps twenty feet they fell and dried, forming a criss-cross pattern of trunks, very convenient to sit on (Golding, 12).

Both stories, *Things Fall Apart* and *Lord of the Flies*, are written in third person with an omniscient point of view. They have similar downfalls caused by manipulative characters trying to gain control of the other people. In *Things Fall Apart*, the missionaries arrive and eventually take control of people through the use of religion, resulting in the death of Okonkwo. The arrival of the missionaries has caused a considerable stir among the village

of Mbanta (Achebe, 144). In *Lord of the Flies*, Jack uses hunting to gain control of the Ralphs tribe. Kill the pig, cut her throat, spill the blood (Golding, 69) was the chant led by Jack as his hunters killed the first pig.

Achebes tone is predictive in the title he uses, *Things Fall Apart*. The story, written as a tragedy, describes Osonkwos fall from greatness through the invasion from outsiders. Achebes tone is clear, descriptive and at the end sympathetic toward the Umuofia. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart (Achebe, 130). Unlike Achebe, Goldings pessimistic and violent tone is used to reveal his perspective on the nature of men in *Lord of the Flies*. The story is written as an adventure to see what boys, free from rules, will do to survive on a stranded island.

Arent there any grownups at all? I dont think so. The fair boy said solemnly; but then the delight of a realized ambition overcame him. In the middle of the scar he stood on his head and grinned at the reversed fat boy. No grownups (Golding, 7-8).

Both authors create an element of change in civilization written as a fear of the unknown. In the beginning of the story, *Lord of the Flies*, the boys are overjoyed about living without the rules and the guidance of adults. But as times passes, the boys begin to weaken without the limits and values imposed upon them by adults and the civilization they once knew.

Awful things has been done on this island What ya going to do, Ralph (Golding, 170)? This is also true in Achebes, *Things Fall Apart*. The society as Okonkwo understood was destroyed by the introduction of a civilized group. When the missionaries arrived, changes in personalities occurred within the

village people as they were familiarized to a new way of religion and life. The white man is very clever. He came quietly and peaceably with his religion.

We were amused at his foolishness and allowed him to stay. Now he has won our brothers, and our clan can no longer act like one. He has put a knife on the things that held us together and we have fallen apart (Achebe, 176). This fear of the unknown resulted in savagery of characters in both stories.